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House Committee on Banking & Financial Services
2/17/99 - Syracuse, N.Y.
Subcommittee on Housing & Community Opportunity
Ms. Rose Sylvester
825 East Willow Street
Villa Scalabrini Apartments #814
Syracuse, New York 13203

I am Rose Sylvester. I am a resident of the Villa Scalabrini Apartments, 825 East Willow Street, Apt. #814, Syracuse, N.Y. I am an original resident of the Apartments which opened in mid-1980 on Syracuse's near Northside. I am a life-long resident of Syracuse, N.Y.

The Villa Scalabrini senior housing has allowed me to live affordably without having to worry about having a roof over my head as I get older. Among the first new senior housing to be built in years, it was a godsend for a growing number of seniors on our side of town and to the neighborhood.

As an original resident of the Villa Scalabrini, I recall well the enthusiasm of the elderly occupants and the caring of Father Louis Pisano of St. Peter's Church who led the effort to develop our apartments. Some things have changed and are of concern to me.

More of my neighbors and friends are in need of care services and encouragement to participate. While those of us who are able continue to run dinners, bingo, and other activities for those who wish to join us, others can't or won't, as they feel their medical problems, frailty, or immobility limits their getting around and being with us.

We could use some additional help in this area through a special staff person or through agency assistance so more of us could join together in activities. Mr. White can speak to how well we came together last Fall after the terrifying Labor Day storm which devastated our area and left us without power for five days. If we could get someone else on staff or an agency to assist with health care, personal care and activities it would be wonderful.

Lastly, as you look at future funds for new senior housing, please don't forget the established buildings. Our neighborhood is changing and we feel less secure. It would increase the security for nights and weekends. Many of us stay home from community functions as we are concerned about our safety upon return. While management works with the police and neighborhood programs, the presence of security would make us feel better and would be an attractive aspect for future senior residents.